



News Release

Date: November 06, 2003
Release Number :03-25

Contact: Mike Ernandes (704) 344-6588 x1135
Public Information Officer

SBA ANNOUNCES GRAND OPENING OF NEW WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER IN ASHEVILLE

Charlotte, NC – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that Mountain Microenterprise Fund (MMF) in Asheville has been designated an SBA Women's Business Center. MMF was the recipient of a grant from SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership. Anticipated funding is \$150,000 per year for up to 5 years. The grand opening will be Monday, November 17, 2003, from 12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m. at the Mountain Microenterprise Fund's main office at 29 ½ Page Ave., Asheville.

This grant will enable Mountain Microenterprise Fund (MMF) to provide training and technical assistance to current and aspiring women entrepreneurs throughout western North Carolina.

"We are thrilled to have been recognized by the SBA both for our past performance - 66% of MMF's program participants are women - and for our potential as a resource for women business owners in western North Carolina," said Carolyn Paden, Women's Business Center and MMF Membership Director.

MMF offerings include:

- One-on-one consultation with business owners and prospective entrepreneurs
- Foundations Business Training Program: a 24-hour course which guides potential entrepreneurs through the business planning process
- Workshops on topics such as financial management, QuickBooks, public relations and marketing
- Microloans from \$2,500 to \$25,000
- Access to office technology

Since 1989, MMF has provided the Foundations business training course to over 1,100 individuals and has disbursed over 140 loans totaling over \$350,000.

For information on the grand opening and the Women's Business Center or contact Carolyn Paden, at (828) 253-2834 or carolyn@mtnmicro.org. Visit MMF's website at <http://www.mtnmicro.org>.

--more--

New SBA Women's Business Center in Asheville 03-25/ Page Two

The WBC will operate in 5 locations.

Main Office: 29 1/2 Page Ave. Asheville, NC 828-253-2834	46 South Market Asheville, NC 828-251-9146	El Centro Comunitario 1314 Main St. Hendersonville, NC 828-692-5826	629 Main St. Sylva, NC 828-631-0292	Tri-County TeleCenter 4195 US 64 West Suite 8, Murphy, NC 828-835-3289
---	--	--	---	--

MMF's mission is to help individuals from Western North Carolina to start or expand economically viable microbusinesses. MMF helps these microentrepreneurs learn to develop their basic business skills, network and problem-solve with their business peers, access MMF's small business loan pool, and increase their self-confidence and thus their chances of business success.

SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO) Established in 1979 to help women overcome barriers in starting a business. OWBO administers the Women's Business Center (WBC) Program which provides business and technical assistance to women.

The 3 WBC's in North Carolina provide long-term training, counseling, networking and mentoring. They are located in Asheville, Durham and Fayetteville. For more information, visit SBA's NC website, <http://www.sba.gov/nc>.

###

For information about SBA's programs call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov. You can receive all of SBA's News Releases via e-mail. To subscribe, visit <http://web.sba.gov/list/> and select Press Office.

###